Crafting a new zoning code

A public meeting hosted by the Zoning Reform Group

When: November 3rd, 7:00 p.m.

Where: Newton Senior Center, 345 Walnut Street, Newtonville

Join the conversation on the future of Newton's Zoning Ordinance and **learn** how the Zoning Ordinance can be made easier to use and **help** better guide Newton's development future

For more information: http://newtonma.gov/Planning/zoning-reform-group.htm

WELCOME!

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THE ZONING REFORM GROUP
PUBLIC PRESENTATION
ON
ZONING REFORM IN NEWTON

THURSDAY NOVEMBER 3, 2011



The Zoning Reform Group

The Vision for Zoning Reform

Themes for Zoning Reform

Recommendations for the Reform Process

Your Part in Zoning Reform

The Zoning Reform Group

- Formed by the Mayor and Board of Aldermen
- Members include architects, attorneys, a developer, a planner, a judge, and an alderman
- Charged to develop "a plan to reform Newton's zoning code" including:
 - Long- and short-term objectives
 - Best practices from other communities
 - Resources and funding



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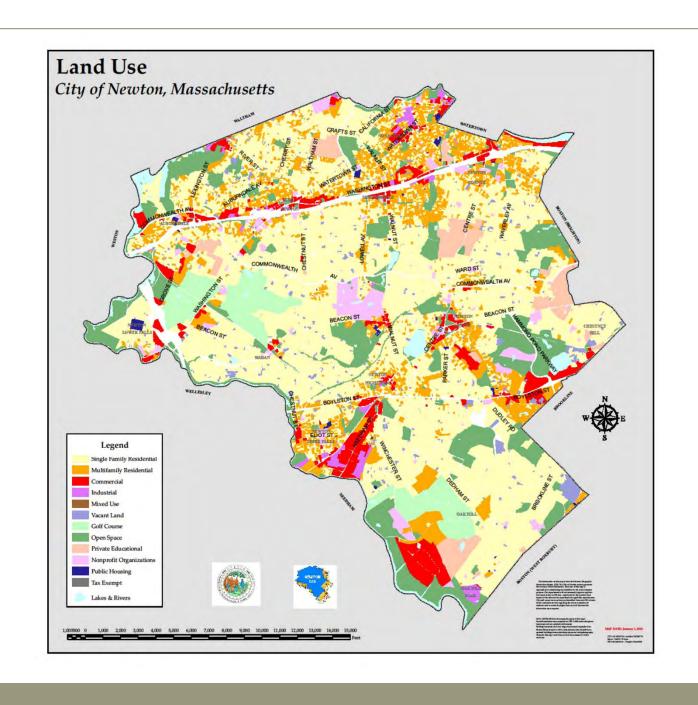
The Vision for Zoning Reform

The Opportunity

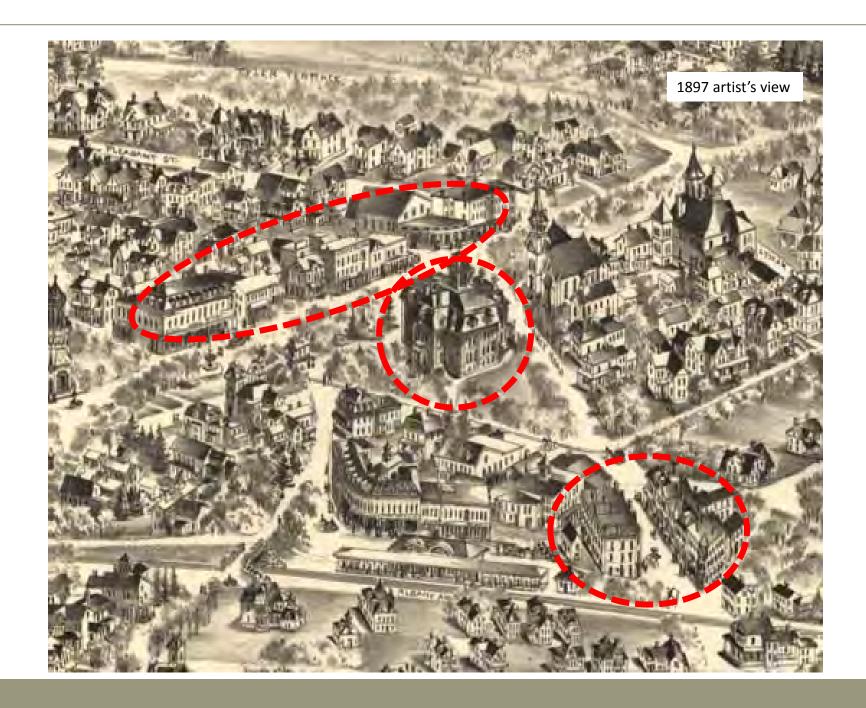
- A new century of smart growth
- Change is already happening
- Zoning is a set of tools to guide development

A vision for a reformed Zoning Ordinance

- Easy to use
- Renew our village centers
- Safeguard our residential neighborhoods
- Build jobs and tax revenues on our corridors











Revised Ordinances 2007

Chapter 30 Zoning Ordinances

with amendments through April, 2011 Ordinance Z-77



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Principles for Zoning Reform

The Zoning Ordinance Should...

- Be easy to use, administer, and enforce
- Be well-organized, indexed, and cross-referenced
- Use clear, precise, and modern language
- Be internally consistent
- Produce predictable, desired results
- Balance flexibility and predictability
- Support the vision expressed in the Comprehensive Plan



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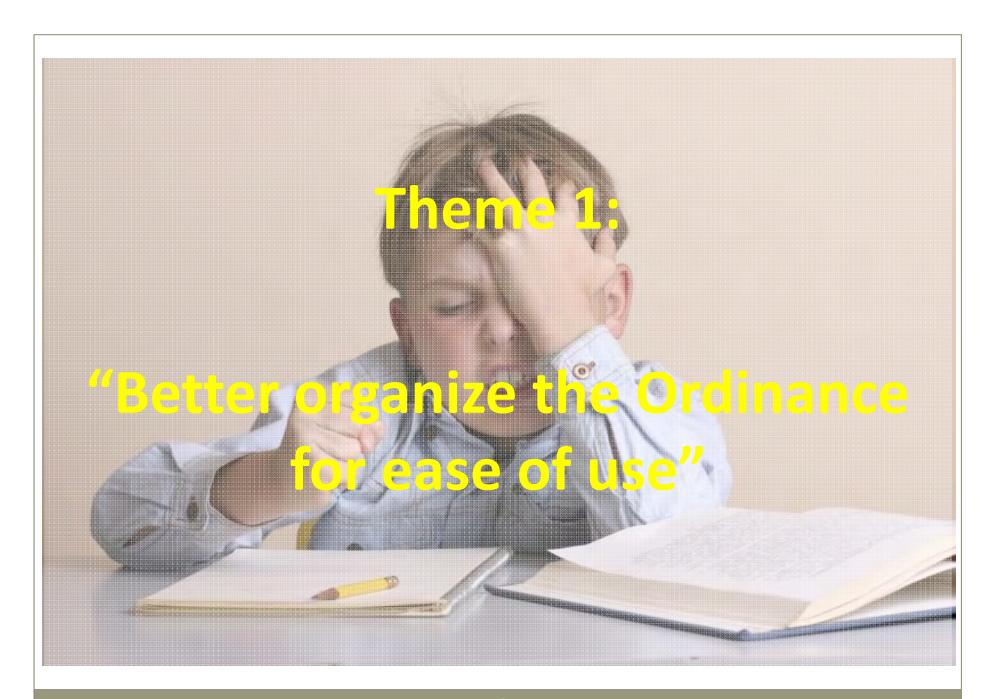
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Your Part in Zoning Reform

Themes for Zoning Reform

- Organization and clarity
- 2. Permitting and review
- 3. Distinct villages and corridors
- 4. Mixed-use village renewal
- 5. Soft transitions
- 6. Growth along commercial corridors
- 7. Parking regulations
- 8. Neighborhood scale and character
- 9. Diverse housing opportunities
- 10. Religious and educational institutions
- 11. Sustainability



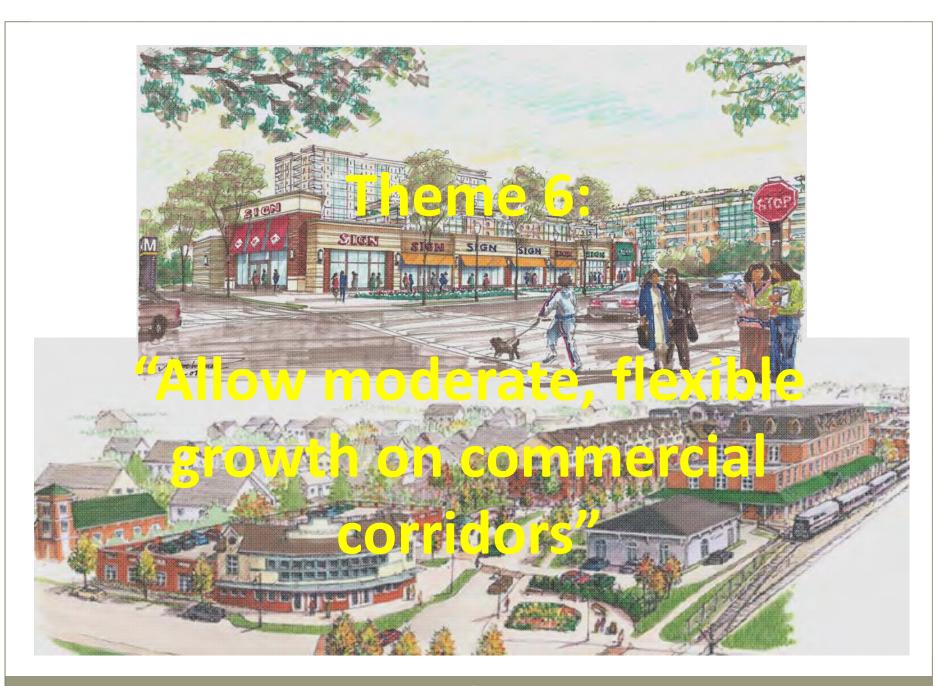








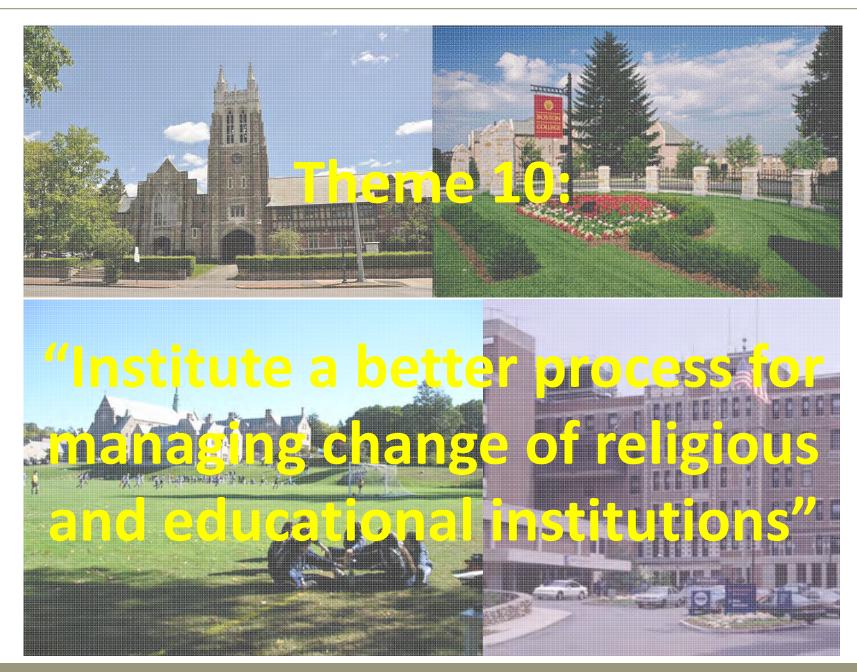
















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Your Part in Zoning Reform

Towards a Reform Process

- Many approaches considered
- Interviews with planners and consultants
- Researched successful zoning reform strategies

Consensus vision:

Phase 1: Reorganize

Phase 2: Rewrite

Phase 3: Review



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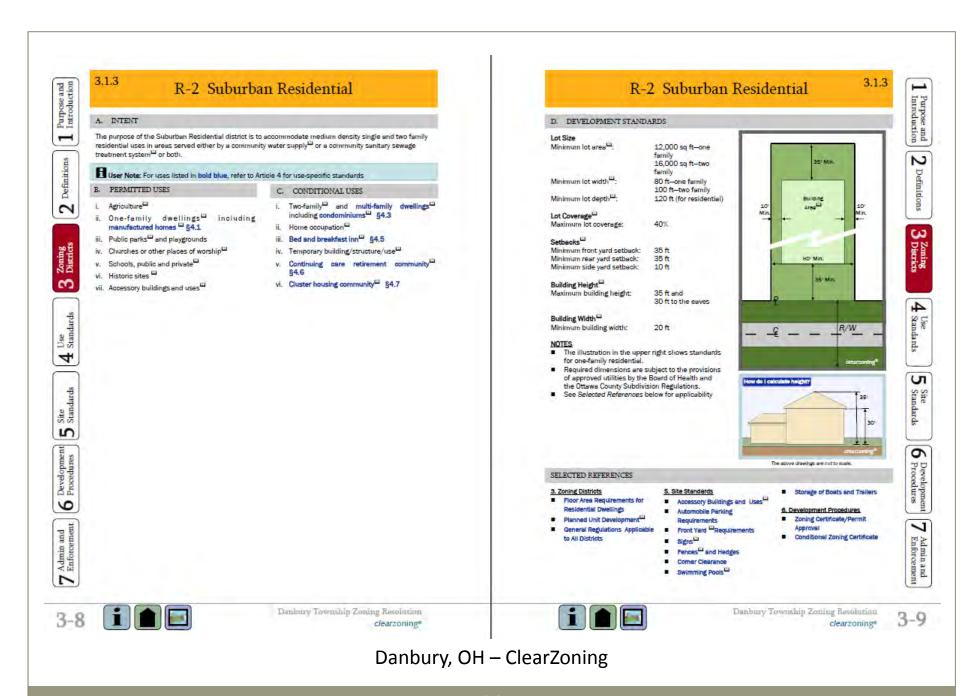
Your Part in Zoning Reform

Phase 1: Reorganize

Scope:

- Make the document easier to use
- Putting rules and definitions where they belong
- Add graphics and tables
- Add cross references and an index
- Resolve errors and conflicts

For example...





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Your Part in Zoning Reform

Phase 1: Reorganize

Process:

- Six to twelve months
- Specialized consultants
- Staff project management
- Cost estimate: \$40,000-\$50,000

What this achieves:

- A user friendly document we can all understand
- Saves time, energy and expense
- Highlight conflicts among policy goals
- Early concrete achievement



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Your Part in Zoning Reform

Phase 2: Rewrite

Scope:

- Comprehensive revision
- Reconsider the zoning map and zoning districts
- Revise dimensional, density, and use regulations

Process:

- Expert consultant team
- Strong staff project management
- Community engagement to achieve consensus
- Estimated time: 2.5 years
- Estimated cost: \$200,000-\$250,000 over 2-3 years



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Your Part in Zoning Reform

Phase 2: Rewrite

What this achieves:

- Clarity and predictability
- Support and facilitate the development we want, where want it, and not where we don't



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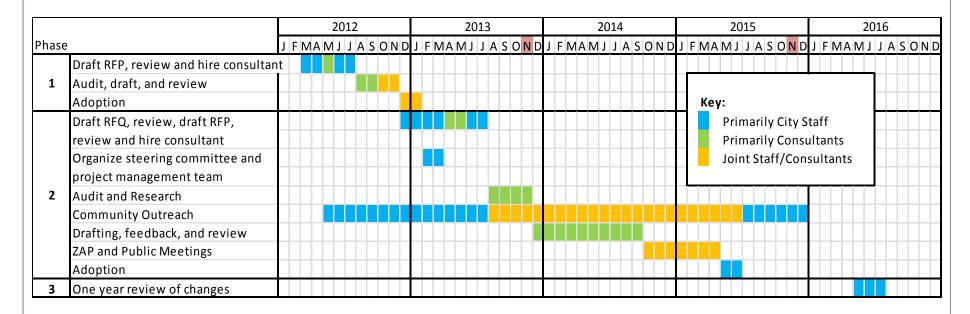
Phase 3: Review

- After one year, consider an integrated package of adjustments to the new Ordinance if needed
- Ongoing annual reviews

What this achieves:

- Integrated zoning amendments achieve desired outcomes, not unintended consequences
- Ample time for process to "shake out"
- Avoids "stop-gap" fixes

Proposed Timeline for Zoning Reform





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Your Part in Zoning Reform

Working with Consultants

- Benefits of outside consultants
 - Dedicated personnel
 - Specialized skills and expertise
 - Outside perspectives
- Elements necessary for success:
 - Strong staff guidance and project management
 - Political ownership of the process
 - Commitment of resources
 - Ongoing citizen engagement



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Resources

Newton should make the investment of capital and personnel:

- Approximately \$50,000 the first year and then \$80,000 per year for next three years
- Dedicate staff time for project management and community outreach



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The Way Forward

A plan, but more to do

- Begin Spring 2012 with Phase 1
- Build political and community ownership
- Fund the process



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Your Part in Zoning Reform

What can you do to help?

- Give us your suggestions and feedback
- Sign up on our email list
- Talk with your aldermen about zoning reform
- Take a copy of our final report back to your neighborhood organizations
- Invite the Planning Department to come speak in your community
- Stay involved and keep the momentum going

Thank you!

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